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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASTANA 001608

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/27/2018

TAGS: PREL PGOV RS GG KZ

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN - DEMARCHE DELIVERED ON RUSSIAN
RECOGNITION OF SOUTH OSSETIA AND ABKHAZIA

REF: (A) STATE 91894 (B) STATE 91366

Classified By: Pol-Econ Chief Steven Fagin, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) The Deputy Chief of Mission delivered ref A demarche on Russia's recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia to DFM Kairat Sarybay on August 27. The DCM also raised the Kazakhstan-specific points from ref B, and noted that Kazakhstan was in a unique position of influence because of its good relations with both Russia and Georgia. In response, Sarybay expressed Kazakhstan's concerns about the latest developments and promised to expeditiously pass the USG position to his superiors. He told the DCM that "you know well our position on Northern Cyprus, in spite of our good relations with Turkey, and our position on Kosovo, in spite of our good relations with the U.S. and the EU." (Comment: Sarybay was alluding to Kazakhstan's support for territorial integrity and opposition to separatism as a matter of principle. The DCM deployed the Kosovo points from ref B to explain why Kosovo is a unique case and not a precedent for other conflicts. End Comment.) Sarybay noted that President Nazarbayev would be meeting with Russian President Medvedev in Dushanbe on the margins of the SCO summit, perhaps as early as this evening (i.e., the evening of August 27). Kazakhstan's official position on Russia's recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia should become clearer after that meeting. In the interim, the government is under orders to stay silent and make no public statements, Sarybay explained.

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